

## NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION PRESERVATION PROGRAMS

*The information provided below is intended for emergency recovery and response, not general treatment recommendations.*

### PHONOGRAPHIC DISCS (VINYL, SHELLAC, and ACETATE DISCS)

#### *Priority Action:*

- **Clean and air dry discs within 48 hours**
- **Freezing is untested; if air drying is not an option or there are large numbers of wet discs, freeze at above 0° F/18° C**
  - Pack vertically in padded plastic crates in preparation for freezing
  - Records are prone to shatter at low temperatures

#### *Recommendations:*

- **Salvage shellac and acetate discs first - they are more sensitive to water**
- **Remove discs from their sleeves and jackets**
  - If labels have separated, mark label information on the center of the disc with a grease pencil and keep track of label
  - Jackets, sleeves, and labels may be air dried or freeze dried like other paper materials
- **Hold discs by their edges**
- **Wipe discs dry with a clean, soft, non-abrasive cloth or air dry discs vertically in racks or on supports that allow for free circulation of air**
  - Dry slowly at ambient temperature away from sources of heat or dust
- **If dirt has been deposited on discs, they can be cleaned**
  - Separate shellac, acetate, and vinyl discs - they should be washed in separate trays
  - Wash discs in a 1% solution of a non-ionic wetting agent such as Kodak Photo Flo in distilled water
  - A soft brush can be used to carefully dislodge particles
  - Thoroughly rinse off the solution with plain distilled water
  - Use a soft, lint free cloth to blot off water along disc grooves
  - Place discs vertically in racks to dry
- **If storage boxes for discs are badly damaged:**
  - Transfer discs (no more than 5 at a time) to cardboard cartons or plastic crates
  - Pad crate bottoms
  - Interleave every 25 discs with padding to absorb shocks
  - Always pack discs vertically
  - Since discs tend to get very heavy, pack groups of discs in smaller rather than larger boxes (or in large boxes with extra padding) so that they can be easily moved

*Recommended Supplies:*

- Distilled water
- Kodak Photo Flo
- Grease pencil
- Soft brush
- Ethafoam or bubble wrap

*The information and links provided by NARA are offered as a service and do not imply endorsement of any company, institution, or person. The scale of the emergency and types of materials affected will determine the specific actions or techniques to be taken and whether in house salvage is possible or whether external resources and expertise are necessary.*